



General Assembly

January Session, 2019

Committee Bill No. 642

LCO No. 6377



Referred to Committee on GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION
AND ELECTIONS

Introduced by:
(GAE)

**AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND
CAMPAIGN FINANCE.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 9-601 of the general statutes is amended by adding
2 subdivisions (32) and (33) as follows (*Effective from passage*):

3 (NEW) (32) "Online platform" means any public-facing Internet web
4 site or application or digital application, including, but not limited to, a
5 social network, advertisement network or search engine, that sells
6 qualified political advertisements and (A) has four hundred thousand
7 or more unique monthly visitors or users, which visitors or users have
8 an assigned Internet protocol address within the United States, for
9 seven of the preceding twelve months, or (B) has revenue from
10 advertising in excess of one thousand dollars per year.

11 (NEW) (33) "Qualified political advertisement" means any
12 advertisement, including, but not limited to, sponsorship and search
13 engine marketing, that is an expenditure, as defined in section 9-601b.

14 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) For each sale of a qualified

15 political advertisement on an online platform, as those terms are
16 defined in section 9-601 of the general statutes, as amended by this act,
17 such online platform shall: (1) Make available for online public
18 inspection, and in machine-readable format, a digital copy of the
19 qualified political advertisement; and (2) provide to the State Elections
20 Enforcement Commission the name, street address and phone number
21 of a single point of contact at such online platform who is responsible
22 for the sale and appearance of such qualified political advertisement
23 on such online platform.

24 Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 9-601c of the general statutes is
25 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
26 *passage*):

27 (b) When the State Elections Enforcement Commission evaluates an
28 expenditure to determine whether such expenditure is an independent
29 expenditure, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the following
30 expenditures are not independent expenditures:

31 (1) An expenditure made by a person in cooperation, consultation or
32 in concert with, at the request, suggestion or direction of, or pursuant
33 to a general or particular understanding with (A) a candidate,
34 candidate committee, political committee or party committee, or (B) a
35 consultant or other agent acting on behalf of a candidate, candidate
36 committee, political committee or party committee;

37 (2) An expenditure made by a person for the production,
38 dissemination, distribution or publication, in whole or in substantial
39 part, of any broadcast or any written, graphic or other form of political
40 advertising or campaign communication prepared by (A) a candidate,
41 candidate committee, political committee or party committee, or (B) a
42 consultant or other agent acting on behalf of a candidate, candidate
43 committee, political committee or party committee;

44 (3) An expenditure made by a person based on information about a
45 candidate's, political committee's, or party committee's plans, projects

46 or needs, provided by (A) a candidate, candidate committee, political
47 committee or party committee, or (B) a consultant or other agent acting
48 on behalf of a candidate, candidate committee, political committee or
49 party committee, with the intent that such expenditure be made;

50 (4) An expenditure made by an individual who, in the same election
51 cycle, is serving or has served as the campaign chairperson, treasurer
52 or deputy treasurer of a candidate committee, political committee or
53 party committee benefiting from such expenditure, or in any other
54 executive or policymaking position, including as a member, employee,
55 fundraiser, consultant or other agent, of a candidate committee,
56 political committee or party committee;

57 (5) An expenditure made by a person or an entity on or after
58 January first in the year of an election in which a candidate is seeking
59 public office that benefits such candidate when such person or entity
60 has hired an individual as an employee or consultant and such
61 individual was an employee of or consultant to such candidate's
62 candidate committee or such candidate's opponent's candidate
63 committee during any part of the eighteen-month period preceding
64 such expenditure;

65 (6) An expenditure made by a person for fundraising activities (A)
66 for a candidate, candidate committee, political committee or party
67 committee, or a consultant or other agent acting on behalf of a
68 candidate, candidate committee, political committee or party
69 committee, or (B) for the solicitation or receipt of contributions on
70 behalf of a candidate, candidate committee, political committee or
71 party committee, or a consultant or other agent acting on behalf of a
72 candidate, candidate committee, political committee or party
73 committee;

74 (7) An expenditure made by a person based on information about a
75 candidate's campaign plans, projects or needs, that is directly or
76 indirectly provided by a candidate, the candidate's candidate
77 committee, a political committee or a party committee, or a consultant

78 or other agent acting on behalf of such candidate, candidate
79 committee, political committee or party committee, to the person
80 making the expenditure or such person's agent, with an express or tacit
81 understanding that such person is considering making the
82 expenditure;

83 (8) An expenditure made by a person for a communication that
84 clearly identifies a candidate during an election campaign, if the
85 person making the expenditure, or such person's agent, has informed
86 the candidate who benefits from the expenditure, that candidate's
87 candidate committee, a political committee or a party committee, or a
88 consultant or other agent acting on behalf of the benefiting candidate
89 or candidate committee, political committee, or party committee,
90 concerning the communication's contents, or of the intended audience,
91 timing, location or mode or frequency of dissemination. As used in this
92 subdivision, a communication clearly identifies a candidate when that
93 communication contains the name, nickname, initials, photograph or
94 drawing of the candidate or an unambiguous reference to that
95 candidate, which includes, but is not limited to, a reference that can
96 only mean that candidate; [and]

97 (9) An expenditure made by a person or an entity for consultant or
98 creative services, including, but not limited to, services related to
99 communications strategy or design or campaign strategy or to engage
100 a campaign-related vendor, to be used to promote or oppose a
101 candidate's election to office if the provider of such services is or has
102 provided consultant or creative services to such candidate, such
103 candidate's candidate committee or an agent of such candidate
104 committee, or to any opposing candidate's candidate committee or an
105 agent of such candidate committee after January first of the year in
106 which the expenditure occurs. For purposes of this subdivision,
107 communications strategy or design does not include the costs of
108 printing or costs for the use of a medium for the purpose of
109 communications. For purposes of this subdivision, [campaign-related
110 vendor] "campaign-related vendor" includes, but is not limited to, a

111 vendor that provides the following services: Polling, mail design, mail
112 strategy, political strategy, general campaign advice or telephone
113 banking; [.] and

114 (10) An expenditure made by an online platform, which expenditure
115 displays the name, face or voice of a candidate, ninety days or less
116 before the day of a primary or election if such expenditure was not
117 made neutrally or evenly as to such candidate and each opponent of
118 such candidate. For the purposes of this subdivision, "expenditure
119 made by an online platform" includes, but is not limited to, any tool or
120 feature created by or for such online platform that appears on or is
121 integrated with such online platform.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	9-601
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	9-601c(b)

Statement of Purpose:

To define "online platform", require such platform to make publicly available copies of electioneering communications and contact information at such platform for such communications and impose a rebuttable presumption that certain content created by or for such platform is not an independent expenditure if displayed during the ninety days prior to a primary or election.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]

Co-Sponsors: SEN. LESSER, 9th Dist.

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